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A Study of John Winthrop as the Key Figure  
in the Establishment of Covenant Theology  
in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts Bay

by  
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Date: March 23, 1974

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A Thesis  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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- I. Purpose: to interpret John Winthrop's covenant ideology and explain how he carried the concept throughout his life. I also hope to illustrate the idea of the "promised land" or new kingdom by the covenant and practical achievements of the seventeenth century.
- II. John Winthrop
  - A. Background
  - B. Governor
- III. The "Great Migration"
  - A. Motives
  - B. Results
- IV. John Winthrop's Journal
  - A. Excerpts showing God's mercy
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- V. Federal or Covenant Theology
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  - B. Adopted by New England
- VI. Covenant
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        - 1) definition of the covenant
        - 2) sacraments as seals of the covenant
      - b. William Ames
        - 1) definition of the covenant
        - 2) sacraments as seals of the covenant
      - c. John Preston
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      - e. John Cotton
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    - 4. John Winthrop's evidence of the Covenant of Grace
  - B. Social covenant
    - 1. Winthrop's divine calling
    - 2. "The Modell of Christian Charity" (1630) - Winthrop's exposition of the social ideal
    - 3. national covenant
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      - a. the political theory of New England
        - 1) Winthrop's "Modell of Christian Charity"
        - 2) church and state relations





- 3) position of the magistrates
- 4) Winthrop's "Speech to the General Court" (1645)
- b. contract theory
  - 1) Richard Hooker
    - a) theory of consent
    - b) relation of theory to social covenant
  - 2) Thomas Hobbes
  - 3) John Locke
- C. Ecclesiastical covenant
  - 1. divine calling
  - 2. as social covenant
  - 3. relation to the Church of England
  - 4. as the foundation of the church in New England

## VII. Heretics (according to John Winthrop)

- A. Roger Williams
  - 1. typology in scriptural interpretation
  - 2. consideration by Winthrop
- B. Anne Hutchinson
  - 1. beliefs
  - 2. court proceedings
    - a) church and state relations
    - b) position of magistrates

## VIII. Failure of the commonwealth to become a model nation

- A. Refusal of England
- B. Loss of covenant
  - 1. signs of decay
  - 2. wrath of God
  - 3. replaced by ethics and reason

## IX. Conclusion



John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts Bay colony, was the organizing genius who established a society of God in New England, a "citty upon a hill" for all to see. By studying John Winthrop, we can learn more about the covenant theology which the federal theologians developed; and by understanding covenant theology, we can better appreciate what John Winthrop was doing. Winthrop employed the Puritan Covenant of Grace as a model for the social, civil, and ecclesiastical covenants which he set forth in Massachusetts Bay. Thanks to Winthrop's interpretation and application of the covenant, the New England Puritans believed they were accomplishing a divine calling even as they developed a sense of unity with each other, strangers in a strange land. During the seventeenth century John Winthrop implanted the idea of the "promised land" in the American soul by means of the covenant and its practical achievements.

In the England whence Winthrop came, there was much unrest and dissatisfaction within the Church. During the reign of James I, many leaders had fallen into the heresy of Arminianism which asserted that by their own will power men could achieve faith and thus win salvation. The Puritans were especially alarmed by the encouragement given to this heresy when Charles I ascended the throne of his father in 1625 and openly admitted his fondness for Arminianism by making William Laud Bishop of



London in 1628. The Puritans considered Laud to be anti-Christ.<sup>1</sup> The Arminians and William Laud returned the favor of the King's preference by preaching the authority of the king. Under the Elizabethan settlement the King ruled the Anglican Church, and as offices fell vacant, Charles promoted Arminians to fill them.

As the evils in church and state multiplied, the Puritans looked to Parliament for relief. As a result of many pleas from Puritan ministers, Parliament demanded an end to unparliamentary taxation and also the suppression of Arminianism in the church. Parliament passed a resolution that anyone who attempted to bring in either popery or Arminianism should be accounted as a capital enemy of the King and kingdom. By this test Charles would be his own worst enemy; a week later, on March 10, 1629, he dismissed parliament and made it evident that he did not intend to call another.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in the view of most Puritans "the last bulwark against sin and heresy" had disappeared. Many individuals felt that "without Parliament there was scarcely a hope left of fulfilling the will of God in England."<sup>3</sup> Some individuals affected by the dissolution of Parliament decided to give up on England and separate themselves from the Church of England. There were already Separatists among the Puritans; some of them, later known as Pilgrims, had in 1607 emigrated to Holland and then



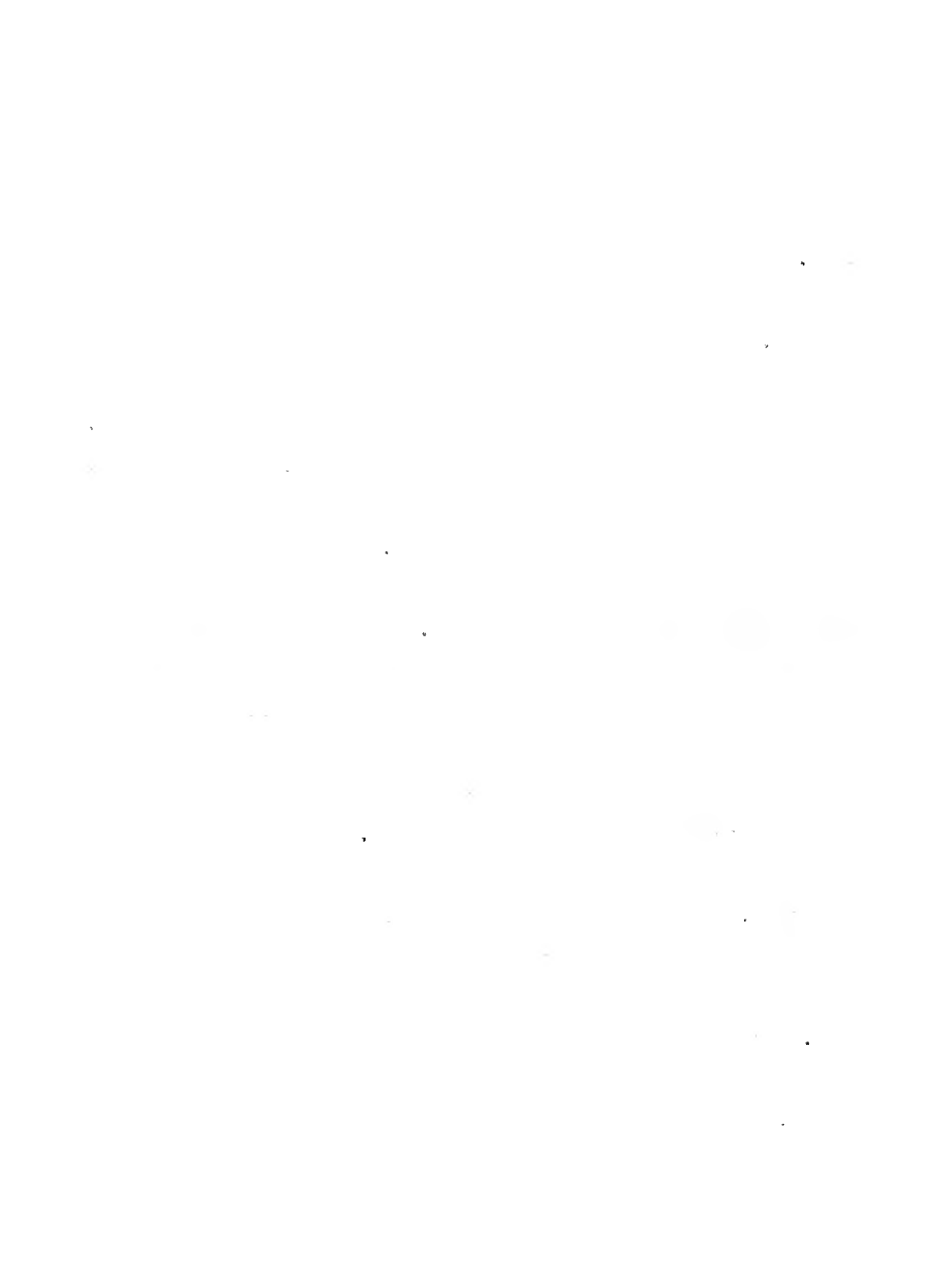
to Plymouth Plantation in New England in 1620. Other Puritans did not know where to turn; separation began to appear more and more enticing. Should they stay with a church that God had deserted or should they desert too? By 1630 the course of action to take finally appeared to John Winthrop and a number of his followers: they would "leave England altogether, yet leave it with the approbation of the King and without repudiating its churches and the Christians in them."<sup>4</sup> In their own conception, the Massachusetts Bay Puritans were merely establishing the true Church according to the Word of God; they were separating from the corruptions of the Church of England, not from the Church itself. As evidence of the fact that these Puritans did not consider themselves Separatists, Francis Higginson, founder of Salem Colony, wrote in 1629: "We do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England; though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it: but we go to practise the positive part of Church reformation, and to propagate the gospel in America."<sup>5</sup> As the Puritans were very Bible-oriented and turned to the book for reassurance in every aspect of life, they possibly found reassurance for their migration in Jeremiah 50; "they (the children of Israel) shall go, and seek the Lord their God" and "shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward."<sup>6</sup>

The idea of going to the New World was not a new idea.





Virginia had been settled more than twenty years before; the Bermudas and the Barbados had been colonized too; and in New England a group of Separatists had been living in Plymouth since 1620. Even though colonization in the New World was not a new idea, John Winthrop had felt no need or desire to emigrate prior to 1629. As an attorney and manor lord of Groton in Suffolk, England, Winthrop suffered greatly with the dissolution of Parliament in 1629 and also lost his attorneyship at this time. Winthrop did not make a firm decision at once to leave England, but hints of his emigration idea may be found as early as May 15, 1629, in a letter to his wife Margaret. Winthrop told her that "If the Lord seeth it wilbe good for us, he will provide a shelter and a hidinge place for us and ours."<sup>7</sup> Later in the same year on July 28, Winthrop wrote of an incident which showed God's mercy: "My brother Downing and myself, riding into Lincolnshire by Ely, my horse fell under me in a bogge in the fennes so as I was almost to the waist in water; but the Lord preserved me from further danger, Blessed be his name."<sup>8</sup> The latter incident possibly played a large part in Winthrop's decision in favor of departure. Winthrop was convinced that God was in favor of the migration, and the preserving act of God which occurred seemed to suggest to Winthrop that he should be a member of this migration. It should be noted, however, that a meeting was held on this same day at Tattershall, the home of Issac Johnson, a Puritan leader. Several prominent Puritans who were interested in



emigrating met to discuss a plan for the government of the colony; Winthrop was quite impressed with the plan which may possibly have removed his last doubts. It was probably at this time that Winthrop became a member of the Massachusetts Bay Company.

At this time John Winthrop had not, so far as we know, made a definite personal decision to emigrate but offered many arguments in support of the purposes of the migration. Winthrop saw England as offering fewer opportunities than America and probably was referring to the unemployment of Suffolk. He said, "This land grows wearye of her Inhabitants."<sup>9</sup> Winthrop found that in England the people were too extravagant and land was hard to come by. In America, the buyer could purchase much more land for the same price. Winthrop's most compelling argument was the judgment which the Puritans thought God would shortly bring upon England. "All other Churches of Europe are brought to desolation," Winthrop wrote, "and it cannot be, but the like Judgement is comminge upon us: And who knows, but that God hath provided this place, to be a refuge for manye, whom he meanes to save out of the general destruction."<sup>10</sup> Here again was the tone which prevailed in his letter to Margaret; God would provide a "shelter" or "refuge" for those he meant to save. Were those that he meant to save actually the "chosen people?" Many Puritan ministers approved of the New England enterprise,

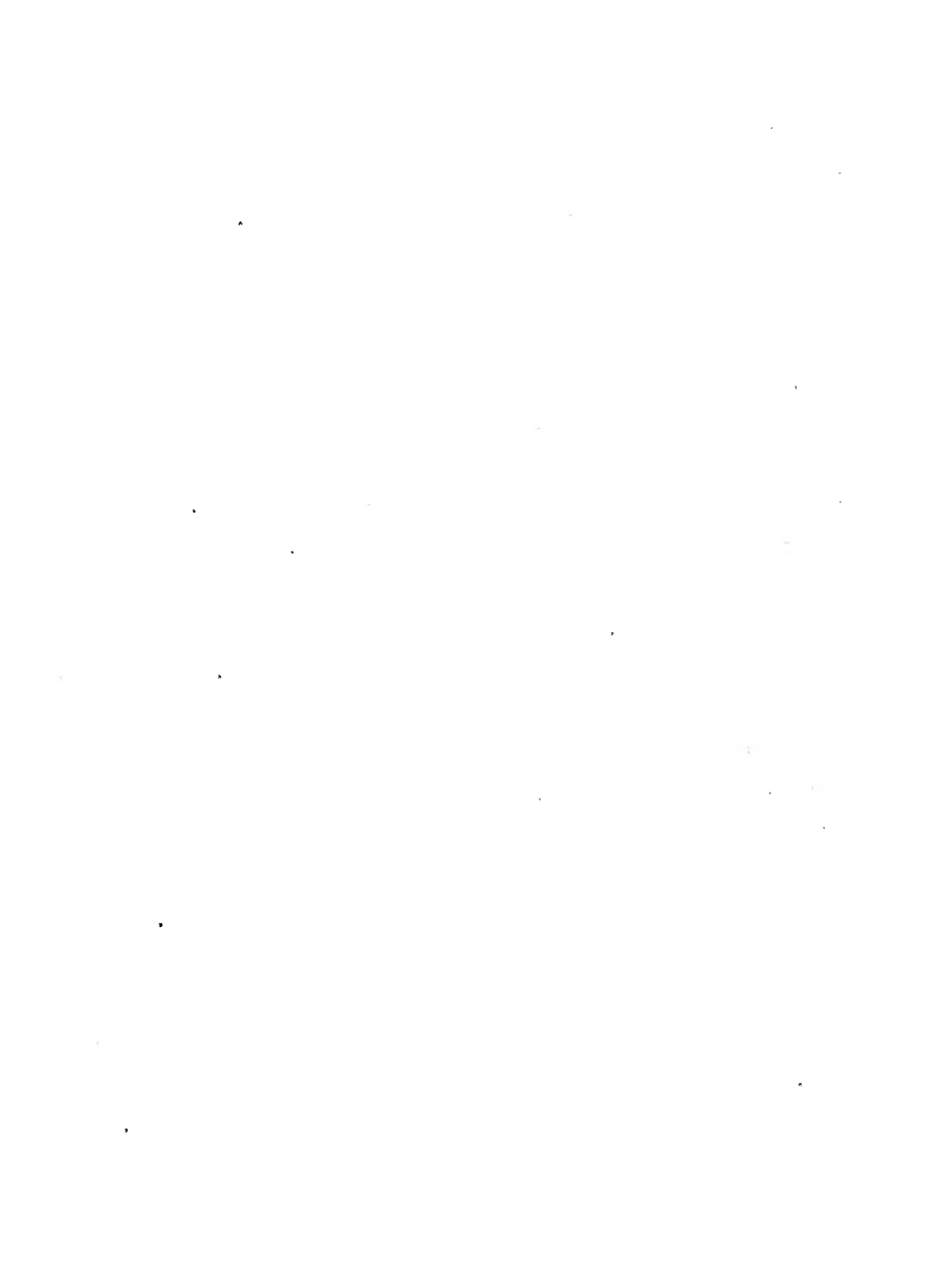


and Winthrop felt that this ministerial approval was "a reliable sign of its acceptability to God, for surely God would not 'seduce his people by his owne prophetts,' in order to follow a course contrary to His will."<sup>11</sup> The latter statement suggests how the Puritans came to think that they were the "chosen people." God certainly would not let them leave England if they had not been chosen to do so; as a result, those who were able to go considered themselves the "chosen."

As we have noted, Winthrop was not himself a member of the Massachusetts Bay Company prior to July 1629 and was no more prominent than any other squire or magistrate of his day. The chief undertakers of the migration must have been impressed by his character and ability. They characterized Winthrop as "He whom the 'Cheife undertakers' of the migration would not do without, 'the wellfare of tne Plantation' depending 'upon his goinge' with them to the New World."<sup>12</sup> Winthrop was finally persuaded by the members of the Massachusetts Bay Company that he could more competently fulfill God's will in New England and also become prominent in the government of the New World. Winthrop now felt an "inward call"<sup>13</sup> to New England, which appears to have been aroused by the request of the Company. Winthrop's personal ambition longed for satisfaction through greater public service, and he welcomed the opportunity to lead the new colony and shape it according to the Word of God.



Many economic elements entered into the motivation for the "Great Migration" of 1630: unemployment, the increase in land prices, and the crisis in the cloth industry. In addition the growing corruption of English life greatly distressed the Puritans: there was a gradual deterioration of schools and universities, and the Puritan clergy were receiving ill treatment. There was an increasing acceptance of Arminianism by the established Church clergy, and the King's governing without a Parliament greatly depressed the Puritans, for they only had a voice in the government of England through Parliament.<sup>14</sup> As a result, many Puritans migrated to New England. Some found their way to the New World by following prominent lay leaders or a particular preacher. Some were settlers in search of a New Jerusalem; others were in pursuit of a "main chance."<sup>15</sup> By 1640, when the convening of the Long Parliament removed some of the Puritans' motives for flight, there were more than 20,000 settlers in Massachusetts. The best evidence that the colonists' chief motive was religio-political is the fact that hardly anyone migrated to New England after 1640 because then the Puritans had a voice in the control of England through Parliament.<sup>16</sup> The chief motive for the settlement of Massachusetts was religious in as much as they wanted the opportunity to establish a Puritan church, but the settlement did not result in religious toleration. The Puritans tolerated only those who believed and worshipped as they themselves did as we shall see subsequently.





The Puritans "had undertaken to establish a society where the will of God would be observed in every detail, a kingdom of God on earth. . . . Every nation, they all knew, existed by virtue of a covenant with God in which it promised to obey His commands."<sup>17</sup> England had failed its promise to keep the covenant with God, and so God's wrath would fall upon the nation. God showed his approval of the "Great Migration." "By staying His wrath so long and allowing them to depart in peace, by delivering them safe across the water, He had sealed a covenant with them and given them a special responsibility to carry out the good intentions that had brought them into the wilderness."<sup>18</sup> New England would uphold the promise which England had failed to keep. The promise consisted of the reform which had begun in England but was not carried out.

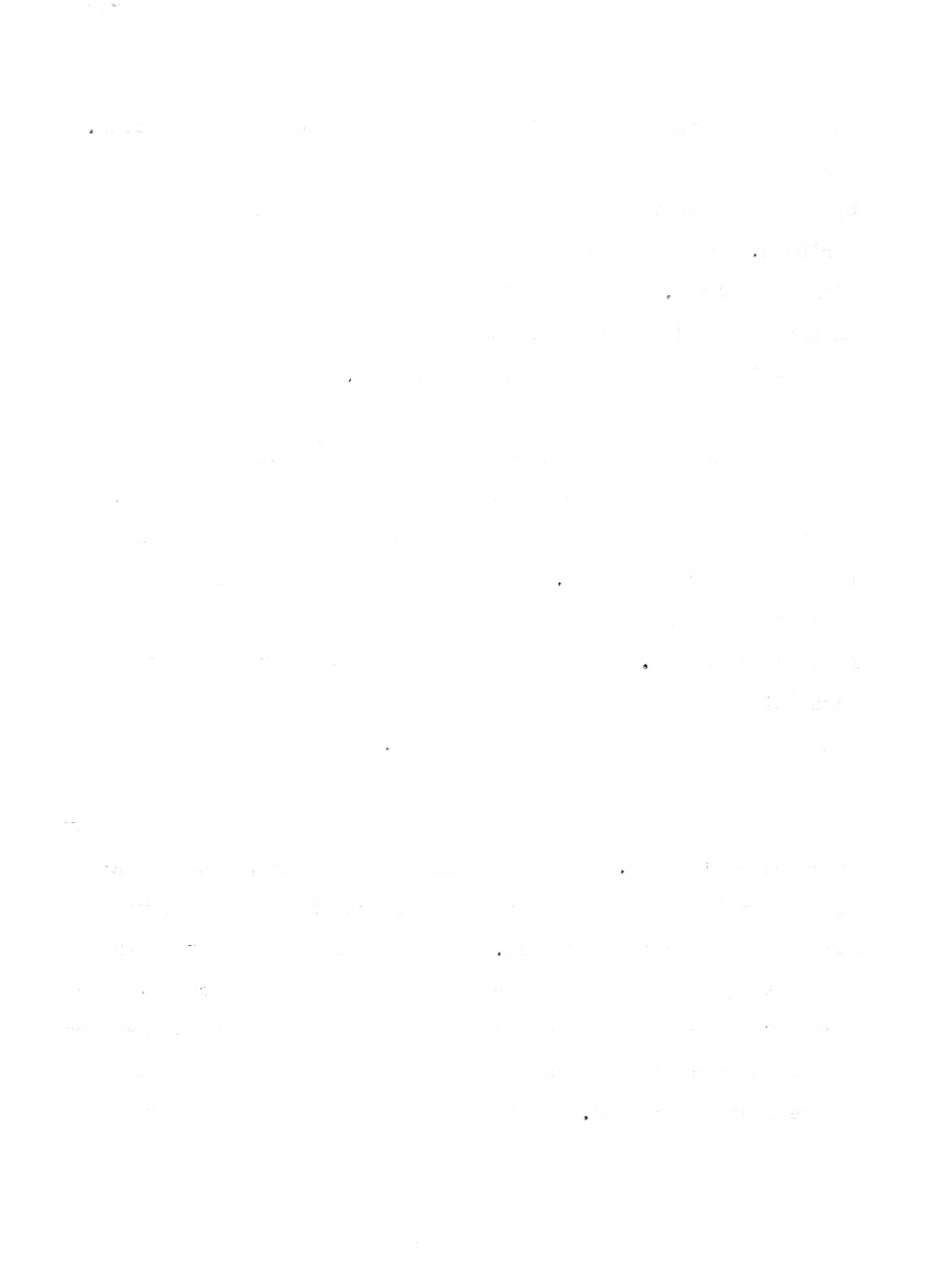
The New England settlers were convinced that God had particular oversight of their endeavors and that it was their duty to enlighten the world concerning His favor to them. A consciousness of being chosen was evident in many of the reports, journals, histories, diaries, and other writings of the period. John Winthrop has been termed by Perry Miller the "chosen Moses" in light of Winthrop's being conscious of leading a new and even mightier Exodus. By the time the fleet was assembled Winthrop had commenced a Journal.<sup>19</sup> Winthrop's Journal shows his belief that God gives special favor to His people both through mercy and revenge. One of Winthrop's entries told how mice had gotten



into a storeroom of the colony which contained grain and books. When then the mice were found, it was noticed that nothing had been eaten except a Book of Common Prayer, much detested by the Puritans. The Puritan mice had eaten every page from that idolatrous book.<sup>20</sup> Winthrop's description of this incident showed that God favored the actions which his people, the Puritans, were taking and agreed with their beliefs.

As evidence of God's revenge, Winthrop records, "It hath been always observed here, that such as fell into discontent, and lingered after their former conditions in England, fell into the scurvy and died."<sup>21</sup> Puritans such as Winthrop felt that God took revenge against those who regretted their journey from the homeland. These people were not concentrating on organizing a society based on God's word, rather they were reminiscing of the old ways in England.

The Puritan task in the New World was to organize a society based on God's word. Before reaching New England, a Congregational discipline had been decided on, even though it was not derived from strict Calvinism. George Langdon states that the Puritans agreed upon what Perry Miller calls "two essential features of Congregational polity, the restriction of church members to proved elect and the autonomy of particular congregations," before leaving England.<sup>22</sup> Winthrop and others in his group



believed that the only safeguard against the forces of evil lay in the establishment of a society after the concept of William Ames, which was to establish a covenant community.<sup>23</sup> For this reason and for their own salvation the chosen people migrated to America to carry out their plans. John Winthrop was the great leader of the Puritan exodus.

We must recall that while in England in the early seventeenth century, the Puritans had a limited range of public expression of their views on reform and none for the implementation of their ideas on the Church of England. The Puritan preachers were allowed to set forth the doctrines and the way of life they deduced from the Bible and to have their teachings put into print.<sup>24</sup> The leading Puritans, who had a decisive influence on New England's leaders, were Calvinists and had no real intention of differing with the accepted creed. There were among them a group who were the formulators of the Covenant or "federal" version of Calvinism.<sup>25</sup> These theologians presented Jehovah as consenting to deal with sinners according to the terms of a covenant, namely in terms of an agreement between two parties. Covenant or federal theology did not differ with Calvinist doctrine, but it was an addition to or an elaboration of that doctrine.<sup>26</sup> This type of theology was a special way of reading the Scripture so that the books in the Bible could all be seen to make sense in the same way. The doctrine held that after the



fall of man, God voluntarily condescended to treat man as an equal. He therefore drew up a covenant or contract with man in which He laid down the terms and conditions of salvation. Only those are saved upon whom God sheds His grace; He showed how certain men are selected and He prescribed how they might reach a fair assurance of their standing. In the covenant, God pledged Himself not to oppose the human conceptions of right and justice, agreeing to abide by certain human ideas. The covenant is a consistent doctrine of the Bible "which makes it at once the source of belief and the fountain of reason."<sup>27</sup>

Calvinism was well into a process of modification by 1630, and departures from the pristine creed were taking place; by now there were many shades of opinions within Calvinism. The federal theologians developed their own variety of Calvinism along the lines of covenant theology, on the foundation of the Bible as divinely inspired by God and authoritative for faith and practice. They expected all men to accept through faith God's clear teaching as recorded in the Scriptures.<sup>28</sup> Like Calvin, the federal theologians saw God's activity as mysterious and undefinable; God's nature "is capable properly of no definition," all one can say is that "God is an incomprehensible, first, and absolute Being."<sup>29</sup> One of their leading spokesmen, William Ames, also said that God's actions could not be defined. Yet in the covenant God committed himself to a certain course





of action or plan which could be defined and expounded.<sup>30</sup> The Puritans found this adaptation of Calvinism necessary because Calvinism did not fill in the details but established only an overall architecture or framework. Perry Miller has suggested that the New England Puritans could not accept Calvinism without questions because of the growing rationalism of the seventeenth century.<sup>31</sup> The key problems which Calvinism posed for the Puritans concerned the necessity of "works" and individual assurance. The men of the 1600's wanted answers to these questions, and men such as William Perkins, William Ames, John Preston, and Richard Sibbes provided the answers.

William Perkins, 1558-1602, was a Cambridge theologian, fellow of Christ College. He was one of the few Puritan divines who attempted to write a systematic theology, and his was most successful. Both Catholics and Protestants considered him the equal of Calvin.<sup>32</sup> "He was the first to smell out Arminian heresy, 'a new devised doctrine of predestination,'"<sup>33</sup> as he called it. Perkins' books were practical in character and typically English in that he was bored by intricate speculation and that he wanted results. Thomas Fuller said that Perkins made the controversy wholesome, but Perkins did not add new doctrines to theology; he was a sound and orthodox Calvinist. Perkins added an energetic emphasis to Calvinism and constantly repeated that the "minutest, ... element of faith in the soul"



is accounted the work of God's spirit.<sup>34</sup> "Man could start the labor of regeneration as soon as he begins to feel the merest desire to be saved." Perkins did not conceive grace as a "soul-transforming experience," but he saw grace as "a tiny seed planted in the soul" which the soul must nourish to growth.<sup>35</sup>

The most prominent of Perkins' disciples was Dr. William Ames, 1576-1633. An outspoken Puritan, in 1609 he preached a sermon denouncing the feast of St. Thomas; he was immediately obliged to leave England and spent the rest of his life in the Netherlands never to return. In 1622 he became a professor of theology at the University of Franeker. Perry Miller has claimed for him the role of father of New England church polity.<sup>36</sup> Ames was an orthodox Calvinist. "His was a more logical and disciplined mind than that of his teacher, and his great works, the Medulla Sacrae Theologiae (1623) and De Conscientia (1630), became important textbooks on the Continent, in England, and in New England because of their"<sup>37</sup> success in explaining religious truth as an organized whole. There is very little difference between his thought and that of Perkins, except that he allowed more space to the covenant. He set forth its nature in great detail and sharply distinguished the Covenants of Works and Grace. Ames provided "an outline of the history of the Covenant of Grace from the time, not of Christ, but of Abraham."<sup>38</sup>

In 1622, John Preston, 1587-1628, became Master of



Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He was a statesman and a politician among Puritan divines. He "had been converted in 1611 by a sermon of John Cotton," and from that time on he gave himself to the study of scholastic divinity. Preston's works, like Perkins', were a "mainstay of New England libraries."<sup>39</sup> Preston spent his time "in unfolding and applying, the most proper and peculiar Characters of Grace, which is God's Image; whereby Beleevers came to be assured, that God is their God, and they in covenant with him."<sup>40</sup> This passage revealed a "great contribution of Preston to the development of Calvinistic thought," for he critically interpreted the covenant, which he held to be "one of the main points in Divinitie."<sup>41</sup> His greatest work was The New Covenant, or the Saints Portion (London, 1629). "This work is prerequisite to an understanding of thought and theology in seventeenth-century New England."<sup>42</sup> Another of his noted works is Life Eternall (London, 1631).

Preston's closest friend was Richard Sibbes, 1577-1635, preacher at Gray's Inn from 1617 until his death in 1635, and also Master of St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, from 1626. Sibbes revealed his awareness of the Great Migration in 1630 when he said in The Bruised Reed: "The Gospel's course hath hitherto been as that of the sun, from east to west, and so in God's time may proceed yet further west."<sup>43</sup> Sibbes was an editor of Preston's work. In many of his own writings Sibbes set forth the nature of the covenant and shaped all his theology in the light of this doctrine.



The most interesting aspect of the history of the covenant or federal theology is the connection among most of the exponents. The completed theology was the work of many men rather than one man. Moreover, this group of authors, in whose life and thought the covenant played a conspicuous part, seemed to coincide substantially with the "group who formulated the peculiar philosophy of Non-separating Congregationalism,"<sup>44</sup> to which adhered the Massachusetts Bay Puritans. At the center of this circle stood Ames whose works are frequently quoted by associates and pupils, and they were all widely read in New England. According to Perry Miller, Perkins, Ames, Preston, and Sibbes were "clearly the most quoted, most respected, and most influential of contemporary authors in writings and sermons of early Massachusetts."<sup>45</sup> "In the works of all these men, including John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, and Peter Bulkeley, and in their lives there is evidence for asserting that they constituted a particular school, that they worked out a special and peculiar version of theology which has a marked individuality and differentiates them" from strict Calvinists.<sup>46</sup> "The central conception in their thought is the elaborated doctrine of the covenant."<sup>47</sup>

Non-Separating Congregational polity and federal theology were brought to New England by the Puritans. This covenantal emphasis in doctrine and church government was in accord with the line of development from Ames. The leaders of the Winthrop





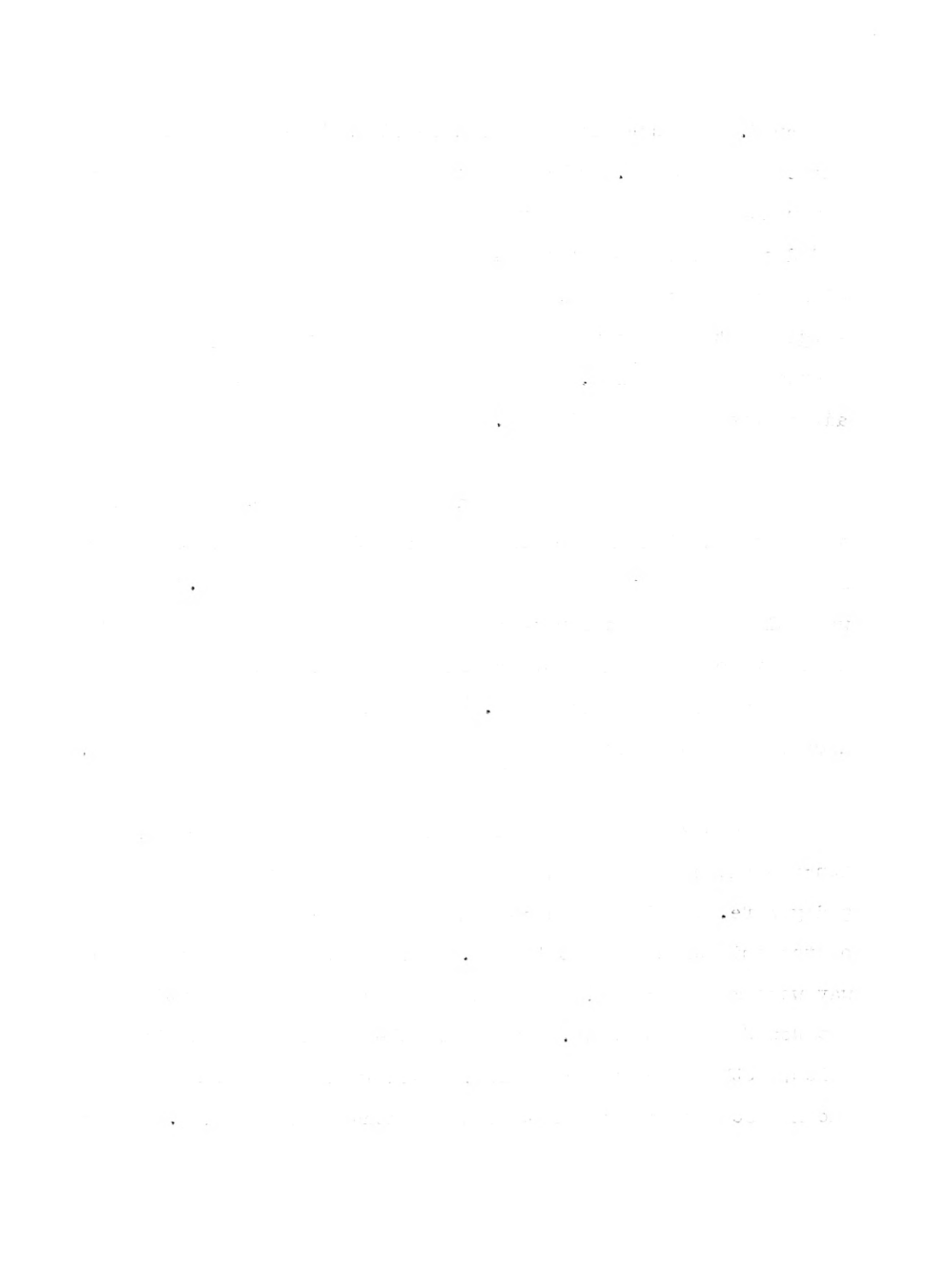
fleet sought ministers who shared these views to fulfill the spiritual and ecclesiastical needs of the people. They sought advice from friends in the ministry about "such of their brethren of the Ministry whom we shall desire to single out for this employ" in the New World. The leading lights of English non-conformity such as William Ames and John Cotton came to their attention, but they were unsuccessfully solicited.<sup>48</sup> Meanwhile the Puritan leaders were building along the elementary lines of congregationalism which were laid down in the summer of 1630. In July or August of 1630, John Winthrop dispatched a series of questions pertaining to congregationalism to John Humphrey, leader in gathering the Winthrop fleet, who had remained in England in order to be able to seek counsel concerning church polity. Unfortunately the questions and answers have not survived, but it is quite obvious that Winthrop was unsure about the rough beginnings of the colony. Humphrey sent the questions abroad, circulating them among the leading English Congregationalists in the Netherlands. He also dispatched a newly published work of William Ames to John Winthrop, an elaboration of the general principles of Christian morality and obligation, "wherein you will find manie thinges of especial use and singularly helpful for present direction and satisfaction." When the answers were returned to Humphrey, he returned them to the governor. The specific contents are unknown today, but presumably the contents developed a line of thought for which Humphrey was not



prepared. His surprise at the directions is shown in his answer to Winthrop. "I confesse plainly in divers things I was persuaded otherwise," he wrote; and while the "sound pietie and deepe judgement" of the author "might enable him to a cleare discerning of the will of god in these thinges," he suggested that Winthrop "proceede warilie and with good examination and digestion." He promised also to solicit additional advice from "other godly men."<sup>49</sup>

Perry Miller has demonstrated the similarity between the school of William Ames before 1630 and the practices and professions in Massachusetts in the late 1630s and 1640s.<sup>50</sup> Ames was solicited by the Puritans, and he suggested in reply that he might join the emigrants "upon the news of your safe arrivall, with good hope of prosperitie."<sup>51</sup> The close relationship of Ames to the Puritans is also shown in the letter from Humphrey.<sup>52</sup>

When the Puritans migrated from England, they left as Non-Separating Congregationalists with the desire to live a godly life. Basic congregational notions were familiar to some of the emigrants but not to all. The origins of the New England way were more complex, involving not just English tradition but New World necessity. The available models of Plymouth and Salem, both Separatist colonies, possibly influenced some of the Massachusetts Bay Puritans in eventually separating. Other



congregational notions were gained from the teachings of the ministers of the Ames school after 1630, by letters, books, and ultimately in person.<sup>53</sup> New Englanders read numerous publications of prominent Puritan leaders and patriarchs of the spiritual brotherhood of Puritan preachers; they respected William Perkins, William Ames, John Preston, and Richard Sibbes, all prominent men of their own generation.<sup>54</sup> These were the dominant spirits of the English Puritan movement; more than that, they were the intimate friends of many of the emigrant ministers. Bonds may be easily traced between ministers who chose to stay in England and those who preferred to settle in New England. For example, Miss Babette Levy has observed that John Cotton had many of his ideas colored by Sibbes; in turn, he had, before he left England, converted John Preston. Similar connections for a number of the ministers can be established. "What was more natural than for the exiles to read diligently, avidly, the numerous publications of their former instructors, companions, and disciples?"<sup>55</sup>

A majority of these publications embodied the doctrine of the covenant, a doctrine which according to the federalists teaches that God has always dealt with man in the way of a covenant. "'As soon as God had Created man, he plighted a Covenant with him.:"<sup>56</sup> Within the covenant, God binds himself to man in a structured relationship in which he is really



accessible to man: "I ... will be your God, and ye shall be my people." (Leviticus 26:12.) The Covenant of Grace is found throughout the Bible, but it appears in different ways. God's first covenant with man was made through Adam; it appeared as the covenant of works, also known as the covenant of nature or covenant of law. On the basis of Adam's obedience to the law, God would grant Adam and the generations to follow, salvation or eternal life. It is not expressly stated in the Scripture that God made this covenant with Adam, but it can probably be supported by Genesis 2:17: "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." However, Adam did not obey God and fell from his grace.

God, being both a righteous and a compassionate God, was then pleased to make a second covenant, commonly called the Covenant of Grace. This covenant made with Abraham and following generations was not dependent on the deed of man but rather on his faith. The covenant appeared as the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, before and after Christ; both covenants as expressions of the Covenant of Grace commanded only faith. "'Sayth the Lord, this is the Covenant that I will make on my part, I will be thy God . . . you shall have all things in me that your hearts can desire: The Covenant againe, that I require on your part, is, that you be perfect with me,' but the perfec-





tion required is in the heart rather than in the hands, 'so that though a man be subject to infirmities, yet, if he haue a single heart, an vpright heart, the Lord accepts it.'"<sup>57</sup> The difference between the Old and New Covenant is that the condition for Abraham was faith, exactly as for us, though he was required to believe that Christ would come. Since the resurrection, we have morely to believe that He has come and He is "surety" for the New Covenant. Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant; therefore, it is also called the Covenant of Christ. But from Abraham to the settlers of New England there is one and the same bond between man and God. According to the Westminster Confession, a product of the seventeenth-century Reformed tradition in England which embodies the federal theology, the Old Covenant was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other ordinances delivered to the people. The New Covenant was dispensed by the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

As in any voluntary contract, the covenant imposes obligations on both parties. The colonists' obligations within the Covenant of Grace included faith and conducting their lives in conformity with God's law.<sup>58</sup> God's obligations consisted of dealing with the colonists according to human rights and justice and bestowing grace upon the faithful. The Puritans



assumed that salvation lay within the reach of all who were within the Covenant of Grace, that is, all of the elect, for they were far from being universalists. This covenant was, in the words of William Perkins, God's "contract with man, concerning the obtaining of life eternall, upon a certaine condition,"<sup>59</sup> which was, of course, faith.

The idea of the covenant was more central to William Perkins' thought than any of his English predecessors, but it was not the organizing principle of his thought. Faith was the prerequisite or starting point of God's election. Perkins used the term covenant to explain the outward means for executing the decree of election. In his commentary on Hebrews 11, he lists the two covenants: works by the law, or the Covenant of Works, and grace by the mediator, the Covenant of Grace. Perkins said that the Covenant of Works was expressed in moral law; the Covenant of Grace was that "'whereby God freely promising Christ and of his benefits, exacts again of man that he would by faith receive Christ and repent of his sins.'"<sup>60</sup>

Perkins asks, "What things must a Christian man's heart desire?" The answer he gave was that man may glorify God, that God may reign in his heart and not sin, that he may do God's will and not the lusts of his flesh, that he may rely himself



on God's providence for all the means of this temporal life, that he may be justified and at peace with God, that by the power of God he may be strengthened against all temptations.<sup>61</sup>

This was the moral obligation of the man who has entered into the Covenant of Grace, and it was the obligation which constantly burdened the conscience of John Winthrop and the other leaders of Puritan New England. The Puritan dilemma was how to fulfill this responsibility: ought one to withdraw from the world or to give in to and become one with the world, thereby losing sight of God? Either course had to be considered an evil. The solution at which Winthrop arrived was that one must learn to cope with the world while living in it.<sup>62</sup> We shall see later how the task of coping with the world or of fulfilling the moral obligation of the covenant is embodied in the social covenant. For the moment it is sufficient to indicate that the moral obligation of living according to God's law follows as a matter of course from faith, and Perkins, like all Protestant theologians, taught that an individual will be saved when he receives Christ by faith, supporting this teaching by quoting Hebrews 10:20 and 1 Peter 3:21.

Perkins considers the sacraments as means of grace whereby man obtains faith and as seals of the covenant. In the fifth principle of Perkins' The Foundation of Christian Religion,



the following question, answer, and explanation are found.

- Q. What are the ordinary or usual means for the obtaining of faith?
- A. Faith cometh only by the preaching of the Word and increaseth daily by it: as also by the administration of the sacraments and prayer.
  - 1. Faith cometh only by the preaching of the Word and increaseth daily by it. Rom. 10:14; Prov. 29:18; Hos. 4:8.
  - 2. As also by the administration of the sacraments. Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 10:1.
  - 3. and prayer. Rom. 10:13.<sup>63</sup>

The two sacraments which he noted as seals of the covenant were baptism and the Lord's Supper. When considering baptism, Perkins offered another question and answer. "Q. What is done in baptism? A. The Covenant of Grace between God and man is solemnly confirmed and sealed. Acts 2:38; Tit. 3:5; Acts 22:16; Matt 28:19." He also stated that the partaking of the Lord's Supper sealed the covenant and used 1 Cor. 11:23-24 and 12:13 as his proof.<sup>64</sup> These statements on the covenant published by Perkins marked the beginning of what is known as federal theology.

William Ames worked out the rationality of the Covenant, but he maintained that there was irrationality behind that Covenant. The irrationality of the Covenant was God's mysterious and arbitrary election; God made no use of foreknowledge in determining the elect and non-elect.<sup>65</sup> The covenant idea for Ames found its principal focus in the Covenant of Grace, as it





described man's individual relation with God and the life of the church. According to Ames, the Covenant of Grace was what a man sought to experience as he lived to God.<sup>66</sup> Ames thought that the clearest expression of the covenant was found in Paul's letter to the Romans: "When we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). He did not begin his discussion of the covenant with Adam, rather he began with the New Covenant with Abraham. He supported the New Covenant with the following Biblical passages: Hebrews 8:8,10; Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:18; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 6:5; 1 Timothy 1:15, 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:17, 6:15; Ephesians 1:13; Isaiah 53:1; 2 Corinthians 2:16.<sup>67</sup> No previous thinker in the Calvinist-Puritan tradition analyzed Biblical references to the covenant with such thoroughness.<sup>68</sup> Like Perkins, Ames declared that the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper were seals of the covenant, but he did not elaborate upon this significance.

William Ames set the stage for John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, Peter Bulkeley, and Thomas Shepard. In America, John Cotton followed Ames and added greater structure and detail to covenant theology. Ames had provided an exposition of the Covenant of Grace which was accepted by the New England Puritans. He also offered a social and possibly a civil covenant which will be considered later.<sup>69</sup>



The third federal theologian was John Preston who observed "God hath made a Couenant with you, and you are in couenant with him." Preston felt that God had dealt and would deal with his children in the light of a covenant, particularly the New Covenant of Grace in Christ. Preston anchored the federal idea to the concept that Adam stood at the head of the race as representative man. Adam had been a "public person," whose descendants' acts related to his own.<sup>70</sup> Preston combined this understanding of Adam with the Covenant of Grace when he declared that according to the logic of the Covenant, men are condemned for not doing what they could do. Because man is in a Covenant of Grace with God, man should continue to do good works for God.<sup>71</sup>

We see most clearly in Preston that a covenant was a contract, a mutual agreement, and a bargain. He proceeded to make the covenant the foundation for the whole history and structure of Christian theology; it was the essence of the program of salvation. He said:

. . . we will labour to open to you now more clearely, and distinctly, this Couenant; though a difficult thing it is, to deliuer to you cleerely what it is, and those that belong to it; yet you must know it, for it is the ground of all you hope for, it is that that euery man is built vpon, you haue no other ground but this, God hath made a Couenant with you, and you are in Couenant with him . . .<sup>72</sup>



Preston held that man not only existed in relation to God as creature to creator, subject to lord, but God and man were bound together in a contract, as between two business partners.

Richard Sibbes did not elaborate extensively on the idea of the covenant, but he recognized it as a mutual obligation, of both sides bound and committed by the terms of the document.

It has pleased the great God to enter into a treaty and covenant of agreement with us his poor creatures, the articles of which agreement are here comprised. God, for his part, undertakes to convey all that concerns our happiness, upon our receiving of them, by believing on him. Every one in particular that recites these articles from a spirit of faith makes good this condition.<sup>73</sup>

The covenant as a mutual obligation was consistently stressed in the New England pulpits. Sibbes summarized the fact into one short sentence when he said, "Though God's grace do all, yet we must give our consent."<sup>74</sup> In New England, the covenant theology of these four men became fundamental to the intellectual development of the leading divines of Massachusetts Bay, especially to John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and Peter Bulkeley.

John Cotton, 1585-1652, gave the idea of the covenant a legalistic tone; he compared the conditions of the covenant to



those of becoming a "freeman of a corporation," which are apprenticeship or purchase. In the Covenant, there is no admission by purchase, he said, and all who hope for grace must serve an apprenticeship in learning godliness.

If we give ourselves to be bound to this service, if we come to God, submit our selves to him in all things, to do with us as hee pleaseth, and as shall seem good in his sight, submitting our selves to be ruled and squared by him in all things, hee shall have our whole hearts to do with us what he will; here is the Covenant made up between God and a good Christian.<sup>75</sup>

While still in England, John Cotton professed his views on the covenant and on the emigrants to New England as the "chosen people" in the form of a farewell sermon. The sermon to the emigrants was based on the text of 2 Samuel 7:10: "And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, . . ." The nature of the sermon was to inspire the new children of Israel with the belief that they were the Lord's chosen people; destined to people the new Canaan in the western wilderness.

What he hath planted he will maintaine. Every plantation his right hand hath not planted shalbe rooted up, but his owne plantation shall prosper and flourish. When he promiseth peace and safety, what enemies shall be able to make the promise of God of none effect? Neglect not walls and bulwarkes, and fortifications for your own defence; but ever





let the Name of the Lord be your strong Tower; and the word of his Promise, the Rocke of your Refuge. His word that made heaven and earth will not faile, till heaven and earth be no more.<sup>76</sup>

John Cotton, together with Thomas Hooker, rejoiced in declaring that God would no longer do the unimaginable things He can do, but He would do what He had promised. Through the covenant God had limited himself; he did this by agreeing to a certain set of terms and regulations.

Thomas Hooker, 1586-1647, insisted that the tiniest particle of grace was enough to start a man on the road to salvation, but before faith was generated, a man could at least "prepare himself for receiving the faith."<sup>77</sup> "God accepts at our hands a willing minde, and of childe-like indeavours; if we come with childe-like service, God will spare us; a father will accept the poor indeavours of his childe for the thing it self."<sup>78</sup> Hooker did not believe that the success of the individual was the most important factor in serving God but the endeavours which he made. The heart must be engaged before faith can be obtained; one must have a willing mind and heart to accept the grace which God gives.

Peter Bulkeley, 1582/3-1658/9, felt that the covenant was the only method by which God dealt with man at all. Salvation was not the product of simple election, promise or choice; salvation came only through the covenant and only to those who



were in covenant with God.

God conveys his salvation by way of covenant, and he doth it to those onely that are in covenant with him . . . this covenant must every soul enter into, every particular soul must enter into a particular covenant with God; out of this way there is no life . . . <sup>79</sup>

Bulkeley agreed with Cotton and Hooker that God would abide by certain rules concerning salvation; God would no longer act without a reason. He did state, however, that the covenant was based on conditional promises which man must fulfill, namely, that man must have faith.

. . . God comes and sayes; For my owne sake will I do thus and thus unto you in an absolute promise; here is a ground for the faith of adherence to cleave unto . . . There be also conditional promises, (He that believeth shall be saved) by meanes of which (we having the experience and feeling of such grace in our selves) we grow to an assurance that we are of those that he will shew that free grace upon.<sup>80</sup>

Peter Bulkeley revealed what the New England divines thought this version of theology had gained over that of primitive Calvinism when he explained that if God simply predestined without imposing conditions, morality would fall to the ground. In light of the covenant, however, man's endeavours are made: "But hereby he would teach us, that when he makes with us a Covenant of Grace and mercy, he doth not then leave us at liberty to live as we list; but he binds us by Covenant to



himselfe . . . ."81 As a partisan of works, Bulkeley set forth man's moral obligation to live according to God's law.

Up to this point we have seen the origin of federal theology and its adoption by New England; now we must consider how the covenant was specifically adopted by John Winthrop. Throughout John Winthrop's Experiencia (1616-1618), he frequently refers to himself as standing in a Covenant with God. As Winthrop speaks of the grace of God, faith in Christ Jesus and the Covenant represented by baptism, one can interpret the Covenant as being the Covenant of Grace: ". . . through the free and neverfailinge mercie of my heavenly father, so as I am resolved, by his grace (O Lord lett not thy grace faile me, I feare indeed greatly mine own frailletye, but I neither hope nor desire, O Lord thou knowest, to stand by mine owne strength, wisdom, etc: but onely by faith in Christ Jesus,) I am resolved, I saye, to stand to the Covenant of my baptisme, renewed so often since; . . . ."82 Also in support of interpreting this and other passages as referring to the Covenant of Grace, Winthrop's explicit use of Perkins must be acknowledged: "After dinner and our famly exercise, I read Mr. Perkins treatise of the estate of a Christian, etc, . . . ."83 The work in question is probably Perkins' A Treatise tending unto a Declaracion whether a Man bee in the Estate of Damnation or in the Estate of Grace (London: 1591).



Winthrop's indirect relation to William Ames through John Humphrey, mentioned earlier, could also account for Winthrop's thoughts on a Covenant. From Perry Miller's study of Puritan divinity it seems likely that Ames' Medulla Sacrae Theologiae was the textbook of the New England Puritans' theology. Winthrop says as evidence of the Covenant of Grace, we search the Scripture and find in the Old Testament Jeremiah 31:1: "At that time, says the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people." In the New Testament, "wee find, Hee that beleeves in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be saved, and that it is of Faith, that it might bee of grace; but other Covenant of Grace then these, or to the same effect," the Covenant of Works, "are not in our Bibles."<sup>84</sup> He also states that "a maine part of the Scriptures . . . holds not forth a covenant of works, but of grace, as appeareth, John 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:15; Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 8:10-12."<sup>85</sup> Ames and Winthrop are found to quote two corresponding Biblical passages, 1 Timothy 1:15 and Hebrews 8:10. Perhaps Winthrop included these passages as his own evidence after reading the Medulla Sacrae Theologiae.

After John Winthrop's election as governor by the Massachusetts Bay Company, Winthrop wrote his wife and said "the onely thinge that I have comforte of in it is, that heerby I have assurance that my charge is of the Lorde and the he hath





called me to this worke: . . ."<sup>86</sup> All regenerate men of Puritan New England experienced a divine calling at some point in their lives. Winthrop believed his personal divine calling to be his election as governor of the Company. This was the vocation which God provided for Winthrop; Winthrop was to lead the Puritans as Moses led Israel.

To the Congregational segment of the Puritan party, the basic idea was the covenant. This was primarily a theological conception, but as a consequence of the Puritan alliance with Parliament against King James and King Charles, it became also a theory of society. Winthrop's famous lay sermon, "A Modell of Christian Charity," delivered upon the Arbella halfway between England and New England, explained to the emigrants how the covenant acted as a theory of society and just how they had committed themselves, out of their free and sanctified will, to the rule of social righteousness. Winthrop's own idea of the covenant came from the Gospels; he explained that the settlers "entered into Covenant" with the Lord by virtue of having committed themselves to Him on voyage and on land. Winthrop explained the covenant to the people in simple terms telling them that they had made an agreement to be God's people and live in Godly fashion. Winthrop's idea of Godly fashion was that of Christian love, that they should be "knit more nearly together in the bond of brotherly affection."<sup>87</sup>



In the "Modell of Christian Charity" Winthrop sums up his thoughts: "We shall be as a citty upon a hill."<sup>88</sup> This idea of an intended society was borrowed from Matthew 5:14. Winthrop convinced the Massachusetts Puritans that they stood in a special relationship to God in which they should build a society which would shine as a beacon to other men. Contemporary scholars do not entirely agree with each other concerning what Winthrop meant when he spoke of a city upon a hill. Richard Dunn has seen the city as a model which shone towards England. Dunn feels that the Puritans hoped to see the same type of community set up in England, which Charles I would then have to notice because as a "citty upon a hill" it was "public."<sup>89</sup> Marion Starkey has held that Winthrop's "citty upon a hill" meant a centralized community which could be easily fortified.<sup>90</sup> Starkey has argued that Winthrop must have been upset when the congregations scattered. Darrett B. Rutman has hypothesized that Winthrop intended society, or the city, in two senses: the city in a literal, physical sense and as a "city of God."<sup>91</sup> In the physical sense, the city would be a centralized community which would contain the seat of the church and the seat of the government and would be a refuge against the Indians. As inhabitants of a "city of God" the Puritans would do as God would have them do. In this manner, they could remodel worship on the Biblical model, cleanse the churches of immorality, and eliminate the office of Bishop, all of which were impossible in England.



John Winthrop gave the Puritan sense of destiny its earliest and most pointed expression in his "Modell of Christian Charity." The Modell spelled out the terms of the Puritan Covenant; terms founded on a divinely ordained social order in which "some must be rich, and some poor." This sort of stratification seemed arbitrary, but having been divinely ordained God would provide for all and maintain the balance.

Another question which Winthrop and the Puritans faced was whether or not to tolerate differing religious practices in Massachusetts Bay. Tolerance was not divinely ordained, and the Puritans interpreted Deuteronomy 13:6,8,9 as justification for their intolerance: "If your brother . . . or your friend who is as your own soul, entices you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which neither you nor your fathers have known, . . . you shall not yield to him or listen to him, . . .; but you shall kill him; . . ." Intolerance was given new force by the divinely ordained social order which was introduced by the Puritans. It was a derivative concept of this social arrangement which was given practical value as an "efficient instrumentality for the creation of a stable and prosperous society . . . ."<sup>92</sup> The rich and the poor would each prohibit the other from taking any advantages or liberties. Winthrop's model colony was thus to be a community of inter-dependent beings who thought and functioned as a single unit.



To function as a unit, a society which would have to remain narrowly exclusive in its membership; each Saint was responsible for his own way of life and that of his fellows. "They were God's chosen people and as such held their spiritual fortunes in common." "The eyes of the world are upon us because we professe ourselves to be a people in Covenant with God, and . . . if we walk contrary to the Covenant . . . we (of all men) shall have the greater sinne."<sup>93</sup> This obligation to God through the Covenant required not only constant self-examination but also the examination of one's neighbors. "We must labor to observe what is amisse in one another, and labor to purge out all our corruptions; thus mutually to help one another."<sup>94</sup> From Winthrop's "Modell of Christian Charity" it is evident that people may join themselves together by a special bond or covenant. Expressed or implicit, they bind themselves to perform all duties toward God and toward one another which relate to the purpose of the church and edification. Moreover, men may join together in covenant to make a city or some civil society when the immediate concern is for the common civil good.

The covenant also appeared in the form of a national or "federal" covenant. A national covenant meant one nation under God; the Puritans upheld their obligation in this covenant by not tolerating divergent religious beliefs and practices in





their community. The covenant existed between God and his people, not any one individual. The federal idea concerning conversion was a logical process following discernible order and beginning with a period of preparation. The preparatory period existed not for social reasons but for evangelical reasons. The Federalists wished to incite men to preparedness so that souls might be saved. Thomas Hooker tried to do just that when he spoke of the existing national covenant in 1644. He said, "As in a Covenant there are Articles of agreement betweene party and party; so betweene God and his people."<sup>95</sup> To become a holy society, the community must know the terms of holiness and observe them as a single unit; the doctrine of preparation secured both of these requirements, so, Massachusetts and Connecticut could conceive of themselves as societies in which "all men" were pledged to observe the externals of religion.<sup>96</sup> The New England Puritans made a covenant with God on a national basis, one which was surely difficult to uphold for history proves that societies decline and individuals stray. When nations or individuals fall from the grace of God, they may repent because God is a gracious God and he will grant pardon when it is asked. According to the Puritan ideas of a covenant, it is obvious that Winthrop would not view twentieth-century America as a nation under God; however, there are many people in America today who believe our nation still has a relationship with God. Even though the relationship is not



that of a Puritan covenant, we refer to ourselves nevertheless as a "nation under God" in the pledge of allegiance to the flag, and "in God we trust" on our coins.

The civil covenant as a product of the social covenant was not the outcome of any specific happening, but it can, I believe, be attributed to John Winthrop and his followers. Many contemporary scholars, on the other hand, believe that the civil covenant was not a product of federal theology; rather, they hold that the civil covenant was produced by John Locke. It is acknowledged, however, that Locke's theories were derived in part from earlier Puritan thought. I shall try to demonstrate my position in what follows. The civil covenant was a bond between two men; God was not a party to it. Typical of the thought that the civil covenant appeared well after Perkins and Ames is the statement that John D. Eusden has offered, "A contractual theory of government, advanced as an application and subdivision of covenant theology, was found principally in eighteenth-century Puritanism when the seminal thought of Ames was no longer at work."<sup>97</sup> There is abundant evidence that a civil covenant did exist in seventeenth-century New England. The government of Massachusetts Bay was based on the commands and precepts of the Bible; the Covenant of Grace served as a model for covenants. The government also depended on the response of the people and governors to the rule of God



which was the essence of a covenant. When the government began to consider these two things, the covenant became also a civil or political covenant.

In his "Modell of Christian Charity," Winthrop discussed the proper form of civil government for Massachusetts Bay to incorporate. Winthrop found that there was no place for democracy in the colony, because there was no authority in the Scriptures referring to democracy.<sup>98</sup> The Puritans believed that the officers of the government were chosen by the people but the positions which they held were God-ordained.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, there was no sense of accountability to the people; the magistrates were answerable only to God. The Puritans originally planned for church and state to be separate, but they became hopelessly entangled. The Puritans showed a willingness and eagerness to pattern their ecclesiastical and civil life according to the Bible through the use of the covenant. All of life was to be related to the covenant and regulated by the revealed will of God. The covenant as a civil compact was the basis of the body politic. The colonists realized they stood under God's rule; therefore, they sought to place his revealed will at the center of their lives. As a civil compact the Puritans made a solemn agreement between themselves and God for the establishment of civil order in their colony. As magistrates held God-ordained offices, it became advisable that the freemen



should be in covenant with the magistrates, thereby giving their consent to conform to the laws of the magistrates. "The Separatists aboard the Mayflower had found in a covenant the obvious answer to the problem of political organization. Jacob had pointed out that a covenant was basic to the existence of the church, and had added, 'By such a free mutuall consent also all Civil perfect Corporations did first beginne.'"<sup>100</sup> In his "Modell of Christian Charity" Winthrop declared that emigrants had entered into a compact not only with each other but with God:

It is by mutuall consent, through a special ouervaluing providence . . . to seek out a place of cohabitation and consorteshippe under a due form of Government both ciuill and ecclesiasticall. In such cases as this, the care of the publique must ouersway all private respects. . . . For this end we must be knitt together, in this worke as one man. . . . We are entered into a Covenant with Him for this worke. . . . We have professed to enterprise these and those ends, upon these and those accounts.<sup>101</sup>

The actual creation of the Massachusetts State by the assemblage of the people dramatized the covenant theory. The people came together and bound themselves to support each other individually and collectively.

In the year 1645 "a squabble broke out in Hingham; Winthrop, then lieutenant governor," intervened and as a result was impeached by the General Court "for having exceeded





his commission and for having violated fundamental law. He was acquitted on July 3, and then, in order" to make his point clear, he delivered a speech to the General Court. "As these Puritans saw it, a man who receives the grace of God employs his liberties to enter a compact with" Him, "promising to abide by God's laws." Man accepts those terms given to him. "By analogy, Winthrop argues that individuals in a natural state are at absolute liberty to do anything they can." "Natural men being what they are" would "naturally" lie, steal, murder, and rape.<sup>102</sup> In contrast Winthrop thought of the civil state as "a state of social regeneration, where all men were at liberty to do only what God commands." This kind of liberty "may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions amongst men themselves."<sup>103</sup> The validity of the rule of law in civil government was based on its being agreed to by the participants. The government was brought into being by the acts of the people, but the institution itself was from God. So the liberty the Puritans exercised by bringing organized societies of New England into being, could only be exercised further by doing that which was "good, just, and honest."

Richard Hooker had propounded a theory of consent in the 1590s. According to Hooker, men were led to form societies because they had a native sociability and were unable to satisfy



their needs in a life of isolation. A society was impossible without government and government was impossible without human or positive law. Hooker defined human law as a derivative from the eternal laws of God. Positive law gave effect to what nature required in general. Men established a society "by growing into composition and agreement among themselves, by ordaining some kind of government public, and by yielding themselves subject thereunto."<sup>104</sup> The Puritan social covenant seems to have been derived from Hooker's theory of consent in government in that men agree to live and act in a certain way when they are bound together in a covenant. The theory of consent in federal theological thought appears in Richard Sibbes' words, "Though God's grace do all, yet we must give our consent." It is just possible that this emphasis on consent in the Covenant of Grace was a reflection of Hooker's theory of consent from a social sphere to a realm of salvation. In any case, though Hooker did not specifically state a contract theory of government, it was but a logical extension of the idea for the federal theology. This idea set forth in England in the late sixteenth century was most probably applied to New England in the seventeenth century. "The rules by which men elect to live together are agreed upon either expressly or tacitly, and the order thus established is law for the commonwealth. The ground of political obligation is therefore the common consent by which men agree to be ordered by someone."<sup>105</sup> This was exactly



how the Puritans viewed their civil or political covenant, and this Puritan view can be found in Hooker's theory of consent.

John Locke's theory of contract government was taken partly from Richard Hooker and Thomas Hobbes. According to Locke, civil power must arise from the consent of those governed. This consent was "the original compact" by which men "incorporate into one society;" it was a bare agreement "to unite into one political society, which is all the compact that is, or needs be, between the individuals, that enter into, or make up a commonwealth."<sup>106</sup> When reading the latter statement it is not apparent to the reader whether the original compact is society itself or only government, but it may be interpreted as society. The portion of Locke's theory which was taken from Richard Hooker concerned the magistrates. The community was capable of holding its magistrates morally responsible because the magistrates, like any other members of the community, were morally obligated to conduct their lives in conformity with God's laws. According to the civil covenant and Hooker's theory of consent, the magistrates ruled by consent of the people. By means of consent the magistrates served the needs of the society. Locke did not follow Hobbes' theory on the absolute power and force of the government; but he expounded on Hobbes' assumptions about individuals and their private



interests in so far as he made both society and government agencies for protecting a man's life, liberty, and estate. These two aspects are related by the hypothesis that an act of the community is constituted by the agreement of a majority of its members. The consent of each person to form a body politic obligates him to submit to the majority; and an agreement of a majority is equivalent to an act of the whole society. When all members of a community agree to act in a certain way, or to submit to rules which most of the members agree upon, the members are bound together in a social covenant. John Winthrop and John Locke shared similar views concerning the theory of consent and the management of the government. Both saw the government based on a civil covenant which was derived from a social covenant.

In the seventeenth century the Church of England was a national and visible church, and it was believed that no other church ought to exist in England. Everyone in England was a member of the Church of England by birthright unless he was a Roman Catholic; therefore, there was no need for a covenant to prove who was a church member. When the Pilgrims or Separatists separated from the Church of England, they found that they needed an ecclesiastical covenant since they were no longer members of the church by birthright. A covenant would prove that their church was visible and define it. The Separatists





believed in the identity of their visible church with the invisible church. In their view only saints could become members of the visible church and only these would partake in the covenant. While the Massachusetts Bay Puritans were still in England, they did not need a covenant as a basis of their church; for this body of Puritans were not Separatists and accepted the Church of England. These Puritans had no use for a church covenant until they came to New England and found it necessary to bind themselves to God. They bound themselves both individually and as a congregation. Perry Miller maintains that William Ames developed the outlines of a church covenant,<sup>107</sup> but John Winthrop first introduced the church covenant. Winthrop referred to a church covenant between himself and God saying "but let the Covenant be examined which is this: I doe renounce all former corruptions and pollutions [those upsetting elements of the Church of England], I doe promise to walke togither with this Church in all the ordinances of Religiō according to the rule of the Gospell, & with all the members heerof in brotherly love. / This is the substance of the Covenant."<sup>108</sup> It is not known at what time Winthrop made this latter statement, but it was probably made before his journey to New England. This was possibly the first expression of a church covenant in England under the Church of England.

Concerning the circumstances in New England leading to



the adoption of a church covenant we have Winslow's letter to William Bradford dated Salem, July 26, 1630. Winslow spoke of the tragedy which had struck at Charles-towne and John Winthrop's reaction to the situation. Winslow reported that John Winthrop said the hand of God was upon them at Charles-towne and to pacify the Lord it was concluded that the Lord should be sought in righteousness. Friday July 30 was set apart ". . . solemnly to enter into covenant with the Lord to walke in his ways."<sup>109</sup> On the date designated several of the members of Charles-towne entered themselves as a congregation, or church, into covenant with God with the following public proclamation.

Covenant of the First Church in Boston  
(Charles-towne, July 30, 1630)

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in  
Obedience to His holy will, and Divine Ordinaunce:

Wee whose names are herevnder written, being by His most wise, and good Providence brought together into this part of America in the Bay of Massachusetts, and desirous to vnite our selves into one Congregation, or Church, vnder the Lord Jesus Christ our Head, in such sort as becometh all those, whom He hath Redeemed, and Sanctified to Himselfe, doe hereby solemnly, and religiously (as in His most holy Praesence) Promise, and bind ourselves, to walke in all our wayes according to the Rule of the Gospell, and in all sincere Conformity to His holy Ordinaunces, and in mutuall love, and respect each to other, so neere as God shall give vs grace.

John Winthrop, Governour.

Issac Johnson.

Thomas Dudley, Deputy Governour.

John Wilson.<sup>110</sup>



Samuel Fuller's letter of August 2, 1630, reported, "Some are here entered into a church covenant the first four, namely, the Governour, Mr. John Winthrop, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Dudley, and Mr. Wilson; since that, five more are joined unto them, and others it is like will add themselves to them daily."<sup>111</sup> This likeliness to join was probably due to the fact that those who did not join in the church covenant could not be accounted as true believers. If men were true believers, they would have no reservations about professing their faith in public.

Perry Miller has said that "the ultimate triumph of the New England mind was . . . the discovery that the Covenant of Grace included and generated the covenant of the churches."<sup>112</sup> The Covenant of Grace gave men liberty, but, as Winthrop said, it was "civil liberty," a freedom to do that which was good and honest. These obligations certainly included participation in the church. The articles agreed upon in the churches were not simply what the people desired but were the laws of God. The civil magistrates of New England conceived of themselves as the executives of Christian states and they took unto themselves powers to expel heretics and to punish disturbers of the ecclesiastical peace.

Roger Williams was a Puritan in England; he rejected the Anglican church government. Williams believed that the elect



alone were to join together in autonomous and democratic congregations; however, unlike the Non-Separating Congregationalists, among whom were the Massachusetts Bay Puritans, Williams believed that these congregations should separate from the established church. In 1631, Williams arrived in New England and was invited to become the minister of a church. Williams refused the offer because the Non-Separating Congregationalists had not separated from the Church of England. This was the first breach with the Bay oligarchy. The real cause of the split between Williams and the Bay leaders lay, however, in their different approaches to Bible history.

While in England, the Puritans had attempted to reorganize the Church of England under a covenant with no results. "In this same spirit, Puritan theologians - especially those who came to New England - read about the covenant which God established with Abraham and so organized churches on a covenant among the saints which included their 'seed.' By this sort of reading, the Puritans produced a theology, an ecclesiastical program, and a social philosophy for New England."<sup>113</sup> John Winthrop, John Cotton and others viewed themselves as latter-day Hebrews building a New Jerusalem in a new world and accordingly laid out a theocracy similar to that of their biblical predecessors.





As a typologist, Roger Williams "aimed at proving the continuity between the Testaments, at showing that a steady unalterable scheme of law had reigned from Adam to the Apostles."<sup>114</sup> Williams believed that the acts of the Old Testament were fulfilled in the New Testament and could not be fulfilled a second time in modern day. Williams viewed the church and its members as merely a private organization with no more rights than that accorded to any other private company or group.<sup>115</sup> "Williams viewed the Bay commonwealth as an untrue state of affairs because of the Christian dispensation."<sup>116</sup> The Puritans "did not entirely condemn typology," and they "recognized that it, if used with extreme caution, might have its uses." "The New England theologians, especially such vigorous leaders as Thomas Hooker and Peter Bulkeley, were so content with the consistency of their covenant or 'federal' version of the Bible that they saw in typology only a fantastic creation of the imagination which had no place in sound scholarship or in orthodox society."<sup>117</sup>

John "Winthrop had read Williams' manuscript treatise (it is lost to posterity, undoubtedly destroyed by the government), but he was not impressed." "If Williams, he said, 'allow not allegories, he must condemn his own writings and speeches, seeing no man useth them more than himself: and this very treatise of his exceeds all that I have read (of so serious an argument) in figures and flourishes.'"<sup>118</sup> John Winthrop



did not have a high regard for Williams, but had such for himself. Winthrop was modest, "but he saw in himself another Joshua; he asked Endecott to compare" the history of Israel with the history of New England in order to refute Roger Williams. Many parallels were found. "Even Williams would have to admit that before the settlement of Massachusetts, God Himself wiped out the Indians by a plague." On behalf of John Winthrop, Perry Miller has asked, "Should the pattern of success in the new world be condemned simply because it happens to resemble the sort of favor shown by the same Jehovah to the chosen people of old? Why hesitate to regard yourself as chosen?"<sup>119</sup>

Williams "remained to the end a stalwart Calvinist, believing firmly in predestination, reprobation, irresistible grace and, above all, in perseverance of the saints." What distinguished Williams from John Winthrop or John Cotton "was simply that he took these doctrines of Calvinism with such utter consistency that rather than settle for a rough approximation to the kingdom of God on earth, he demanded the real thing or nothing at all." "The cast of his mind was not social: it was so exclusively religious that to him the doctrine of the covenant as pronounced in orthodox New England seemed a prostitution of theology to social expediency."<sup>120</sup> Williams thought that the Puritans were using the doctrine of the covenant in a



way that would be beneficial to themselves and their society in achieving a certain end. Williams felt that the covenant no longer existed and had been abolished by Christ. Believing this, Williams could not agree with Winthrop that God had placed his wrath upon the American Indians; he therefore treated the Indians with respect. "He believed that in all human history there had been only one nation in covenant with Jehovah, only one chosen people, and that this unique federation" disappeared "from the earth on the morning of Christ's resurrection." "From then until the end of the world," he believed that "no country as a country, least of all New England," had or would have "a divine blessing peculiar unto itself, and consequently," he believed that "none can exercise such spiritual power in political affairs as did Israel."<sup>121</sup> Williams denied the covenant and the visible church which played such a central part in the lives of the New England Puritans. Williams was ordered by the General Court late in the year 1635 to depart from Massachusetts. Due to Williams' health the order was delayed six weeks, and the General Court warned him not to express his ideas publicly. Despite the warning, Williams continued to express his views, so the Court decided to take immediate action. For some unknown reason, Winthrop warned Williams of the General Court's plan, and Williams fled Salem for Narragansett County, Rhode Island in January of 1636. Williams settled the colony of Rhode Island according to his



own theology just as Winthrop settled Massachusetts Bay according to his. Rhode Island became quite a different type of community from Massachusetts as it was not based on the doctrine of the covenant.

Rhode Island and other colonies reacted negatively to the harsh treatment shown heretics in Massachusetts Bay. As a result of this negative reaction, they took a more open-minded view concerning religious toleration. Rhode Island was the first to practice religious freedom; it was adopted as a direct result of Williams' banishment from Massachusetts. Founders such as Williams and later William Penn, who established their colonies on the principle of religious tolerance, served as models for another, more enlightened generation of Americans. Thus John Winthrop and Massachusetts Bay by a sort of reverse psychology inspired New England and the entire United States to tolerate diverse religious beliefs and practices even though they could not serve directly as models of tolerance for the United States.

Anne Hutchinson was another member of the Massachusetts Bay colony who appeared as a heretic to John Winthrop and other Puritans. The Puritans believed in the doctrine of God's free grace, but Mrs. Hutchinson carried the principles of divine omnipotence and human helplessness in a dangerous direction,





toward the heresy known as Antinomianism. The Antinomians were the lawless ones; they did not believe in the moral law of the Gospel because faith alone was necessary to salvation. They also believed in immediate personal revelation and the intuition of the light of nature. Mrs. Hutchinson declared a belief in immediate personal revelation and insight with which the Puritans totally disagreed. The self-destructiveness of Mrs. Hutchinson became apparent when she suggested to her followers that all the ministers in Massachusetts, with the exception of her favorites, John Cotton and John Wheelwright, were under a covenant of works and therefore unfit to preach the Gospel. When Mrs. Hutchinson attempted to have one of her pastors elected to the Boston Church, Winthrop decided it was time for the General Court to take action. A trial was held in which Mrs. Hutchinson's heresy, so long suspected, was acknowledged, and she was banished from Massachusetts Bay. This action taken by the colony partially proved to England that they had not separated from the Church of England, for Massachusetts as well as England did not practice tolerance in the year of Mrs. Hutchinson's trial. Here again the other colonies of New England had a negative reaction and slowly began to move in the direction of religious toleration. By the year 1700, tolerance was practiced in many colonies throughout the New World.



In the past criticism has been directed chiefly against the procedure in Mrs. Hutchinson's case. Critics contend that in cases of such heavy consequence the defendants were entitled to trial by jury. The Court has been charged with having denied counsel for the defendant and failure to present a specific indictment. To the modern mind the conduct of these trials has seemed shocking, but it should be remembered that in many respects the procedures of the Court were not unlike those which obtained in the English courts of the seventeenth century.<sup>122</sup> The Court's own body of law was sketchy, but the Court held itself subject to English law and, more important, to the law of God. The law of God was upheld in the trials of Mrs. Hutchinson, but to doubly secure the victory it was necessary to make the will of the Court explicit. The purport of the preceding trials was made clear by the following:

This Courte, being sensible of the great disorders growing in this commonwealth through the contempts which have of late bene put vpon the civill authority, and intending to provide remedy for the same in time, doth order and decree, that whosoever shall hereafter openly or willingly defame any court of justice, or the sentences and proceedings of the same, or any of the magistrats or other iudges of any such court, in respect of any act or sentence therein passed, and being thereof lawfully convict in any General Court, or Court of Assistants, shallbee punished for the same by fine, imprisonment, or disfranchizement, or banishment, as the quality and measure of the offence shall deserve.<sup>123</sup>

Winthrop made this statement concerning the relationship



between church and state, hoping thereby to place his actions beyond criticism. There was little sentiment for the Bostonians to take arms against the authorities and they realized that the new law protected John Winthrop from criticism. However, they saw that as long as Winthrop was in "church covenant" with them, he did not stand beyond the admonition of the church. Several members of the congregation urged the ministers to admonish Winthrop in the name of the church. When Winthrop realized the situation, he informed the congregation that the church had no authority "to inquire into the justice and proceedings of the Court."<sup>124</sup> He reminded the people that both in rule and in practice Christ had disclaimed such power. As a private person, Winthrop said, a magistrate was, like any other man, accountable to the church for his private failings. But the church must not presume to call a magistrate to account for his official acts, however unjust they might seem.<sup>125</sup> Winthrop offered one ground for his judgment in the Hutchinson case. He said, "Those brethren were so divided from the rest of the country in their judgement and practice, as it could not stand with the public peace, that they should continue among us. So, by the example of Lot in Abraham's family, and after Hagar and Ishmael, (I) saw they must be sent away."<sup>126</sup>

John Winthrop's speech was useful in defining the relations of the church and state in Massachusetts. Counsel was provided by the church only when requested by the Court, and the churches could not inhibit political authority on what appeared to be



religious grounds. In another essay he developed his reasoning further. If the church had "power to Call any Civill Magistrate, to give Account of his Juditiall proceeding in any Court of Civill Justice . . . the Church should become the supream Court in the Jurisdiction, and capable of all Appeales."<sup>127</sup> This would bestow a power upon the church that it lacked the means to employ. If the church had the power to confront the government, the freemen would no longer be able to govern themselves or have a proportional voice in the government of the commonwealth. Here was one of the first steps taken to separate the church and state. Massachusetts later became a model for the United States to follow in this respect.

After Winthrop's death in 1649 his worst fears came true, the failure of New England to become a model nation. This frustration led the clergy to look for signs of the broken covenant. The Puritans found signs of decay among the church members, between pastors and the laity, in the appearance of heretics, in the violations of Sabbath observance, and in impious children. From 1649 until the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, God's judgment fell on New England. God's wrath appeared as two great fires in Boston, a smallpox epidemic, an outbreak of fever, Indian wars, crop failures, and threats to political control. The root of the problem was that England refused to look upon the Holy commonwealth as a model. One of the main





reasons for the settlement of Massachusetts was to serve as a model for England; the Massachusetts Bay Puritans hoped that England would set up the same type of community as they had established. However, English Puritans, who were tolerated in England at this time, were critical of the American Puritans' harsh treatment of dissenting religious groups and refused to acknowledge the community as a Holy Commonwealth. The Puritans felt that their failure was due to the loss of the covenant. "A people reared on the Old Testament and the history of Israel saw the message clearly; God was warning and chastising His chosen people."<sup>128</sup> The people had to reform and renew the covenant or perish. Yet at this very time, the children of the church chose to ignore the covenant. The New England church faced a serious dilemma: the Massachusetts Bay population multiplied with people who were not always saints, those who would not publicly proclaim themselves to be in covenant with God; and the children of church members were frequently unable to testify that they had experienced conversion. To admit these children was to destroy one of the pillars of their faith; yet if the children were not admitted, the number and power of the members would decrease. William Ames foresaw New England's problem years before when he said, "Yet children are not such perfect members of the church that they can exercise acts of communion or be admitted to all its privileges unless there is first a growth of faith. But they are not to be



excluded from the privileges which pertain to the beginning of faith and entrance into the church."<sup>129</sup> Ames' statement was probably taken into consideration by the Synod of 1662 for they met the problem by making the decision to admit children. They could not take communion nor did they enjoy the privileges of full membership, but they could vote. This arrangement was called the Half-Way Covenant.<sup>130</sup>

The basic ideal of the Puritans had been the covenant as an expression of God's rule over them, and this ideal played a large part in their daily lives. Everything was done in order to fulfill God's will in their lives, including civil and religious matters. However, with the second and third generations in New England there appeared a tendency to ignore the covenants under God, probably because of a diminished concern for the issue of social and political authority and order. In other words, there was no longer the urgency to appeal to God as the sanction for the organization of Puritan society in New England; the society was in fact essentially self-sustaining. The Half-Way Covenant was an action taken to disguise the ignorance and unconcern of the people for the covenants with God. Separatistic tendencies also influenced the people in drifting away from the Puritans' original covenant theology. A more intellectual approach to the loss of the covenant which should be studied was the increasing development and interest in ethics and reason. The diverse attitudes put together in the covenant theology of Ames, Preston, and Sibbes began to break apart in the course of New England thought. During the study of theology and reve-



lation many ideas from nature, law, and reason were injected. One of the basic obligations under the covenant was to practice the external rules of religion without divine assistance. Perry Miller has said, "If the natural man was now admittedly able to practice the external rules of religion without divine assistance, and if such observance would infallibly insure the prosperity of society and most probably the redemption of souls, if honesty would prove the best policy and if morality would pay dividends, then the natural man was well on his way to a freedom that would no longer need to be controlled by the strenuous ideals of supernatural sanctification and gracious enlightenment, but would find adequate regulation in the ethics of reason and the code of civic virtues."<sup>131</sup> Men such as Descartes and Locke offered the ethics of reason to second and third generation Puritans.

John Winthrop's dream of a new Zion was to establish a society which would observe the will of God and also be a "citty upon a hill," a model for others to follow. He fulfilled this ideal by the establishment of social, civil, and ecclesiastical covenants modelled on the Covenant of Grace. He promoted his ideology of covenant theology in New England until his death in 1649. By this time the colony had been refused by England as a model and the importance of the covenant began to wane; nevertheless, the covenant theology of Massachusetts Bay had launched a new nation with its own sense of destiny as God's chosen people.



# NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Of course the Puritans were concerned with many issues affecting the need for reform in the Church of England, and, to the Puritans, William Laud represented those things which they opposed. However, this paper is limited to the development of covenant theology and its application in New England. For other aspects of Puritanism at the time of Laud see William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938).

<sup>2</sup>Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop, ed. Oscar Handlin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958), p.29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Morgan, op. cit., p.33.

<sup>5</sup>John T. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p.337.

<sup>6</sup>Geoffrey F. Nuttall, Visible Saints (Oxford: Alden Press, 1957), p.107.

<sup>7</sup>Morgan, op. cit., pp.36-37.

<sup>8</sup>John Winthrop, Winthrop's Journal: History of New England, 1630-1649, ed. James Kendall Hosmer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), I, p.14.

<sup>9</sup>Morgan, op. cit., p.39.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p.40.

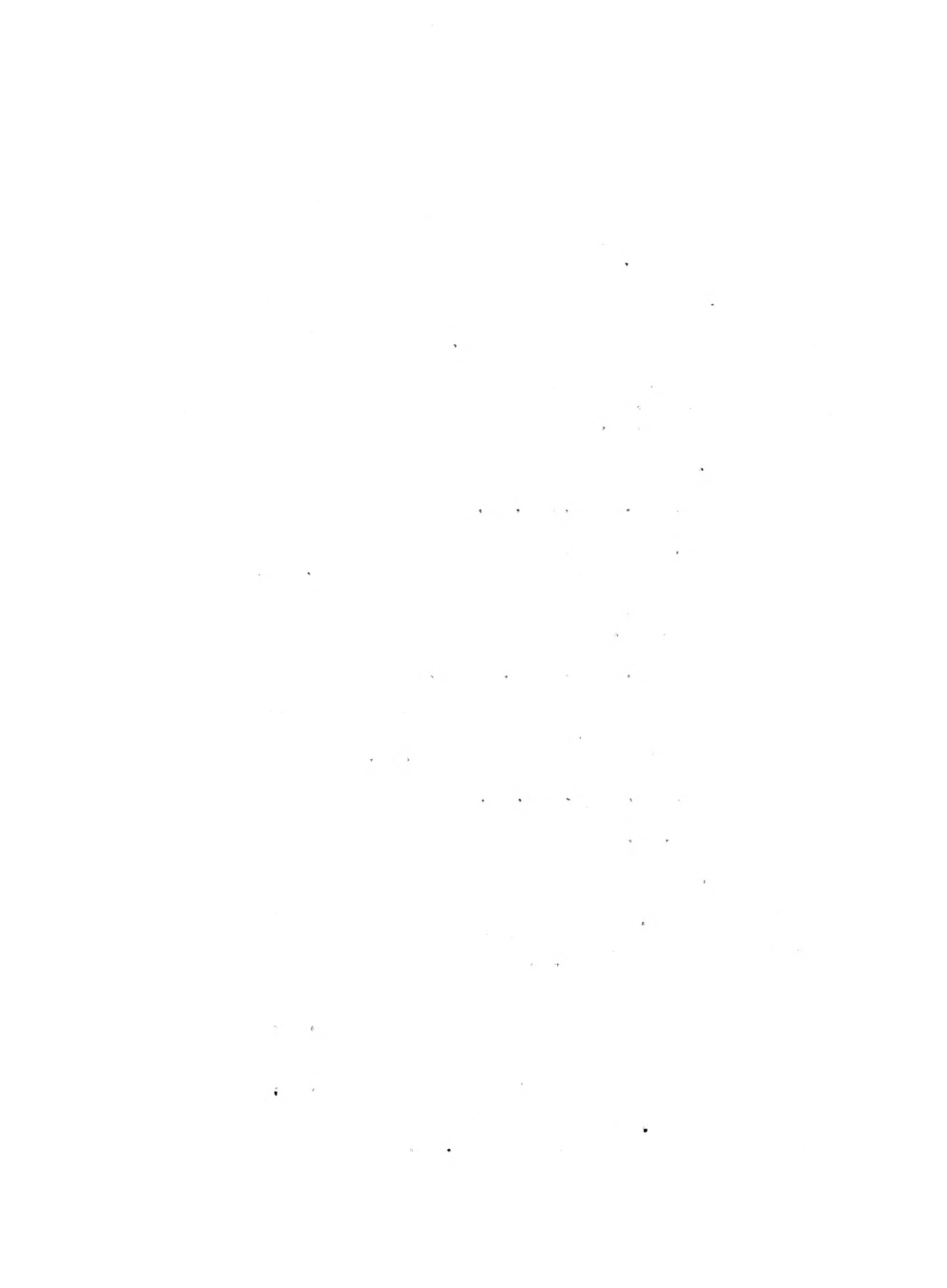
<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Darrett B. Rutman, Winthrop's Boston: Portrait of a Puritan Town, 1630-1649 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), p.3.

<sup>13</sup>Samuel Eliot Morison, Builders of the Bay Colony (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1930), p.67.

<sup>14</sup>William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p.32.

<sup>15</sup>Darrett B. Rutman, American Puritanism (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1970), p.80.





<sup>16</sup>McNeill, op. cit., p.337.

<sup>17</sup>Morgan, op. cit., p.69.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p.70.

<sup>19</sup>Perry Miller, The American Puritans (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1956), p.36.

<sup>20</sup>Winthrop, op. cit., II, p.18.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, I, p.58.

<sup>22</sup>George D. Langdon, Jr., Pilgrim Colony: A History of New Plymouth, 1620-1691 (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1966), p.109. Also see Perry Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), p.77 and William Bradford's Letter Book, reprinted from the Mayflower Descendant (Boston, 1906), pp.56-57.

<sup>23</sup>Thomas Jefferson Wertebaker, The Puritan Oligarchy: The Founding of American Civilization (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), p.37. A more detailed discussion of Ames' covenant community will follow.

<sup>24</sup>William Haller, The Elect Nation (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963), p.248.

<sup>25</sup>Perry Miller, "Preparation for Salvation in Seventeenth-Century New England," Journal of the History of Ideas (1943), p.259.

<sup>26</sup>Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), Chapter XIII, offers one of the fullest treatments of the Covenant of Grace.

<sup>27</sup>Perry Miller, "The Puritan Way of Life," Puritanism in Early America, ed. George M. Waller (Boston: D.C.Heath and Company, 1965), p.18.

<sup>28</sup>Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts Vol. XXXII (1937), p.249.

<sup>29</sup>John Preston as quoted in Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.249.

<sup>30</sup>Professor Ivor Thomas has suggested to the writer and her adviser the parallel between this development in Puritan



thought and that in late medieval Nominalism, namely "a theology rooted in God's potentia ordinata as opposed to His potentia absoluta." Cf. Heiko Augustinus Oberman, The Harvest of Medieval Theology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

<sup>31</sup>Miller, The New England Mind, Chapter VII.

<sup>32</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.255.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. Also see William Perkins, The Works of William Perkins. Volume III of The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics, ed. Ian Breward (Foxton, Cambridge, England: Burlington Press, 1970), p.637ff.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Perry Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), Chapter VI.

<sup>37</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.256.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. See William Ames, The Marrow of Theology, ed. John D. Eusden (Boston: Pilgrim Prsee, 1968), pp.101-103.

<sup>39</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.256.

<sup>40</sup>John Preston, Life Eternall (London, 1631), p.A6 recto, as cited in Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.257.

<sup>41</sup>John Preston, The New Covenant (London, 1629), p.317, as cited in Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.257.

<sup>42</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.257.

<sup>43</sup>Richard Sibbes, Works, ed. Alexander B. Grossart (Edinburgh, 1862), p.100; for interconnections of the group see Grossart's introduction, id., I, passim.

<sup>44</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.257. See Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650, pp.73-102, for a more extended exposition of this view.

<sup>45</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.257.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p.258.



<sup>47</sup>Ibid, with important n.2 on origins of covenant theory.

<sup>48</sup>John Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929), entry dated October 27, 1629.

<sup>49</sup>Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p.101.

<sup>50</sup>See Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, pp.125-126, 159, 165, 169, 172, 175-176, 206.

<sup>51</sup>Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, II, p.180.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid, II, p.336.

<sup>53</sup>Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p.285.

<sup>54</sup>William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), pp.49-82.

<sup>55</sup>Babette May Levy, Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History (New York: Russell and Russell, 1945), p.23.

<sup>56</sup>Quoted by Perry Miller, The New England Mind, p.377.

<sup>57</sup>Richard Sibbes, quoted by Perry Miller, The New England Mind, p.377.

<sup>58</sup>Levy, op. cit., p.31.

<sup>59</sup>William Perkins, Works (Cambridge: 1626), p.32, as quoted in Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.256.

<sup>60</sup>Perkins, The Works of William Perkins, ed. Ian Breward, p.70.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid, p.165.

<sup>62</sup>Morgan, op. cit., pp.7-8.

<sup>63</sup>Perkins, The Works of William Perkins, pp.147-148.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid, pp.163-164.

<sup>65</sup>William Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity (London: 1643), p.105.

<sup>66</sup>William Ames, The Marrow of Theology (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), p.53.

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid, I, XXIV, 10. p.150.

<sup>68</sup>William Ames surpassed his teacher Perkins and other English Puritans of the earlier 1600s in the use of the covenant (See Perry Miller, Errand into the Wilderness (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1956), p.58).

<sup>69</sup>Ames, The Marrow of Theology, pp.52, 180.

<sup>70</sup>Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire (New York: The Dial Press, 1970), p.80.

<sup>71</sup>Miller, "Preparation for Salvation in Seventeenth Century New England," p.257.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid, pp.259-260.

<sup>73</sup>Richard Sibbes, Works, ed. Alexander B. Grossart (Edinburgh, 1862), p.104.

<sup>74</sup>Miller, The New England Mind, p.389.

<sup>75</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.286.

<sup>76</sup>Morison, op. cit., p.72.

<sup>77</sup>Miller, The New England Mind, p.395.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid, pp.386-387.

<sup>79</sup>Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," p.262, citing from Peter Bulkeley, The Gospel-Covenant, p.47.

<sup>80</sup>Peter Bulkeley, The Gospel-Covenant, pp.323-324.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid, p.315.

<sup>82</sup>Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, I, p.194.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid, p.199.

<sup>84</sup>David D. Hall, ed., The Antinomian Controversy, 1636-1638: A Documentary History (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1968), p.295.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid, p.221.

<sup>86</sup>Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, II, p.161.





- 87 Miller, The American Puritans, pp.79-80.
- 88 Ibid, p.83.
- 89 Richard S. Dunn, Puritans and Yankees: The Winthrop Dynasty of New England, 1630-1717 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1962), p.11.
- 90 Marion Satrkey, The Congregational Way (garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p.53.
- 91 Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p.4.
- 92 Emery Battis, Saints and Sectaries (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1962), p.117.
- 93 Bulkeley, op. cit., p.388.
- 94 John Cotton, The Covenant of God's Free Grace (London: 1645), p.10.
- 95 Thomas Hooker, Faithful Covenanter (London: 1644), p.12.
- 96 Miller, "Preparation for Salvation," p.285.
- 97 Ames, Marrow of Theology, p.52. See John D. Eusden, "Natural Law and Covenant Theology in New England, 1620-1670," Natural Law Forum, V (1960).
- 98 Sweet, op. cit., p.85.
- 99 Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p.12.
- 100 Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, p.224; concluding quotation from Champlin Burrage, Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research, 1912, II, p.157.
- 101 Perry Miller, The Puritans (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1938), pp.195-199.
- 102 Miller, The American Puritans, pp.89-90.
- 103 Ibid, p.92.
- 104 Richard Hooker, Book I, Section 10, as quoted in George Holland Sabine, A History of Political Theory (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p.440.
- 105 Ibid, p.440.
- 106 John Locke, Of Civil Government, Book II, Section 99. Also see George Holland Sabine, A History of Political Theory (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), pp.531-532.



107 Miller, The New England Mind, p.442.

108 Robert C. Winthrop, Life and Letters of John Winthrop (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), III, p.416. The brackets are my own.

109 Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, II, pp.265-266n. See William Bradford, Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606-1646, ed. William T. Davis (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), II, pp.112-114.

110 Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, II, p.308.

111 Ibid, pp.308n-309n.

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125 Battis, op. cit., p.223.

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<sup>127</sup>Winthrop, The Winthrop Papers, III, p.505.

<sup>128</sup>Robert G. Pope, The Half-Way Covenant: Church Membership in Puritan New England (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p.186.

<sup>129</sup>Ames, The Marrow of Theology, p.180.

<sup>130</sup>Louis B. Wright, The Cultural Life of the American Colonies, 1606-1763 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p.81.

<sup>131</sup>Miller, "Preparation for Salvation," p.286.



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